



start

WHERE ARE YOU, LORD?

(What connection do you think the following illustration has with the Bible texts on the other page?)

She felt He would never leave her in her moments of distress. After all, He had proven it throughout her 16 years. Surely, He would not start now in this greatest disappointment of her life.

Tearfully she remembered her first tragedy. She was 9 and hurrying home from school with her twin sister Elizabeth when the fuss started. "Stop, teacher's pet!" an older schoolmate commanded angrily. "So you think that you're better than the rest of us?"

The twins ignored the girl and picked up speed. They could hear their mother saying, "Never fight anyone. If a child threatens you, head quickly for home!"

"Coward!" the other girl taunted, picking up a stone. Ellen Harmon looked to see how close behind the girl was. As she turned, the girl flung the stone with all her might, shattering Ellen's nose and plummeting her to the ground in a pool of blood.

Finally reaching home after several fainting spells, Ellen lay in a coma for three weeks. When she emerged, she found her world had changed forever. Her once pretty face was disfigured beyond even her family's recognition. Her friends snubbed her, isolation became her constant companion, and shyness and low self-esteem replaced her cheery disposition.

"But God came through," she told herself. "I sought Him earnestly, and He heard my cry. He showed me that I was of great value and that He loved me." She rubbed the site of her former injury. "Without the accident, I might never have accepted Jesus."

But that was then. What about now?

Today was October 23, the day after Jesus was supposed to return to earth and take her home. Along with other Millerites, she had staked everything on His second coming. Their church had disfellowshipped the Harmons for embracing the "fanatical" doctrine of Jesus' literal advent. They had borne years of taunting for their views, but they figured it would be worth it all. On October 22, Jesus would come and do away with every sin—all pain, disease, division, war, crime and want!

"Some of us even gave away farms, businesses, and all material possessions," she remembered of the Millerites. "All because we wouldn't need them in heaven."

But Jesus had not come! Had she been deceived? Had God finally left her?

For a long time, she gazed at the eastern sky, as though she could see into heaven itself. Then sighing deeply she declared, "No, God hasn't left Father Miller and the rest of us! We weren't deceived. This year of preparation has been the sweetest of our lives! God has been with us mightily, converting the most hardened sinner hearing our appeal to meet Jesus."

She smiled at the memories. "We've done our duty and lived up to God's Word. He will bring us through this disappointment . . . just as He brought me through my childhood distress!"

She dried her tears and walked purposefully back to the house.

Key Text: Choose one of the texts from Wednesday's portion of the lesson. Write it here and memorize it this week.

>> _____

1

Sunday
HERE'S WHAT I THINK

- >> Imagine your grandmother is a famous Adventist who has served God from childhood. Through the years, God used her to establish many church schools and to help educate scores of needy students. Now she has Alzheimer's, and your grandfather is disappointed that God hasn't healed her. He says that God has deserted them and plans to give up on Him.
- >> What would you tell this man who taught you to love and trust God and His Word? In what ways can God be trusted to bring good out of our bad times? At what age does God stop using us to spread His love?
- >> Log on to www.guidemagazine.org/rtf to post your responses. Be up-front and honest. Say what you think.

2

Monday
WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO SAY?

Different people, different opinions. Some of the quotations below represent the views of true kingdom citizens; others may not. Can you tell the difference? How do these statements compare with what God is saying in His Word? After reviewing the texts in the God Says . . . portion of the lesson, write a statement that captures your belief. Be prepared to quote yourself at Sabbath School.

- >> "No problem is so big or complicated that it can't be run away from!"—*Linus to Charlie Brown.*
- >> "It is the wounded oyster that mends its shell with pearl."—*Ralph Waldo Emerson, 19th-century U.S. essayist and poet.*
- >> "To live is to suffer, to survive is to find some meaning in the suffering."—*Roberta Flack, current U.S. pop artist.*
- >> "It is wrong always, everywhere and for everyone to believe anything upon insufficient evidence."—*W. K. Clifford, 19th-century British mathematician.*
- >> "God will look you over, not for medals or degrees, but for scars."—*Edward Sheldon, 20th-century U.S. dramatist.*
- >> "And wilt thou weep when I am low?"—*Lord Byron, 18th-19th-century English poet.*
- >> "I will stick to Christ as a burr to a topcoat!"—*Last words of Katherine Von Bora, wife of Martin Luther.*
- >> "I'm gonna keep on singin' / I'm gonna keep on shoutin' / I'm gonna keep on lifting my voice / And let the world know that Jesus saves!"—*Andrae Crouch, contemporary Christian musician.*

Write your own quotation.
What I say is . . .

>> _____

3

Tuesday
SO WHAT?

- >> The twin subjects of the Great Disappointment and the Heavenly Sanctuary are important because they really address the age-old questions of whether God can be trusted, whether He cares for us, and whether He has a solution for the problem of sin.
- >> Millerites staked everything on Jesus’ promise that He would return to earth, bring sin and suffering to an end, and take His followers home to heaven. They mistakenly concluded that the earth was the sanctuary to be cleansed by the fires of His second coming on October 22, 1844, the end of the 2300 days prophecy. Jesus patiently showed them that the heavenly sanctuary was cleansed of sin instead and that His coming was indeed near. He gave them the comfort and light they needed for their disappointment and their critics.
- >> Early Adventists took courage from the details of the sanctuary service. In it, they saw Jesus as the Great High Priest who was touched by their deficiencies and lived to make intercession for them. His primary focus was to forgive their sins and develop His characteristics in them. Moreover, He assured them that sin would not exist forever, using the symbols of the Old Testament sanctuary service to illustrate this fact.
- >> Some Millerites took heart from this new revelation unlocking the Great Disappointment and pressed on to become Seventh-day Adventists. The good news of the sanctuary became their unique contribution to Christianity.

5

Thursday
WHAT DOES THIS
HAVE TO DO WITH ME?

- >> Although you’re an earliteen, you’ve probably been affected by one of the following situations. Divorces or firings. Deaths or defeats. Oppression or injustice. Diseases or accidents. And the list of human calamities could go on and on. Perhaps you’ve asked, “Where’s God in all of this?” Maybe you sometimes wonder whether He cares about you and whether the long night of sin will ever end.
- >> The good news of the sanctuary is that God does care about you and the havoc sin has made of His planet. He sent His Son not just to sound the death knell of Satan, the source of sin, but also to personally take your sin upon Him so that you won’t suffer the second death. Furthermore, He freely offers you His perfect life—to be claimed any time by faith. He mercifully delays His second coming for everyone to accept this unbelievable bargain.
- >> Accepting it blots out the past and ensures the future, but it also enriches our present, for Jesus is concerned about our entire lives. He doesn’t destroy all forms of sin now, but He gives us the power to cope with them. In fact, He makes them agents of good instead of evil.

4

Wednesday
GOD SAYS . . .

- >> **John 14:3 (NIV)**
“I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”
- >> **Habakkuk 2:3 (NIV)**
“For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.”
- >> **Hebrews 10:35 (NIV)**
“So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.”
- >> **Titus 1:2 (NIV)**
“...a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time.”
- >> **2 Peter 3:9, 10 (NIV)**
“The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”
- >> **Matthew 10:30 (NIV)**
“And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.”
- >> **Psalms 77:13 (KJV)**
“Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary.”
- >> **Revelation 21:3, 4 (NIV)**
“Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”
- >> (More: 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; 2 Peter 3:9, 10; 1 Thessalonians 4: 16, 17)

6

Friday
HOW DOES IT WORK?

- >> God wants us to know that He’s caring and trustworthy. He encourages our curiosity and welcomes our efforts to test Him. “Come now, let us reason together,” He invites us in **Isaiah 1:18 (NIV)**. “Test me,” he encourages us in **Malachi 3:10 (NIV)**. With this in mind, use the following chart to determine His compassion, trustworthiness, and effectiveness.
- >> In the first column, list three or four problems from the What Does This Have to Do With Me? section. Next, find three or four members of your local church who’ve experienced them and wouldn’t mind talking generally about them. Then ask, “Did God care about you in this experience? How do you know if He cared or not? How has the experience affected your relationship with Him?” Record the responses you get from the interviews anonymously in the second column. In the last column, record your own conclusions about God, based on what you’ve observed in the interviews.

Problem	How Member Felt God Responded to the Problem	My Conclusions About God
1. _____	1. _____ _____	1. _____ _____
2. _____	2. _____ _____	2. _____ _____
3. _____	3. _____ _____	3. _____ _____
4. _____	4. _____ _____	4. _____ _____